additional instalment of Dearness Allowance has become due with effect from 1.1.1992 to all Central Government employees and this instalment will become payable only in April, 1992. In want to know from the Government whether this amount will be paid in the form of Indira Vikas Patra or by cash.

SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE: As I have already explained, the Government wants to have the committee to go into the entire issue and after the committee's recommendation reaches the Government, the Government will take a decision.

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY: I would like to know from the Minister whether the Government has any contemplation to freeze or impound dearness allowance; if so, from when?

SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE: The Government does not have such intention. The committee is being constituted. We are waiting for the Committee's report.

MR. SPEAKER: Next question.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have gone to the other Question.

Cotton Export Policy

* 64 SHRI ANBARASU ERA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to review the policy of exporting cotton/cotton yarn;

(b) whether the prices of cotton/cotton yarn are increasing at present;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any decision has been taken to import cotton bales to meet the requirement of weavers;

(e) the names of countries from which these bales are likely to be imported; and

(f) the criteria laid down by the Government to distribute these items among the weavers with a view to save them from unemployment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) to (f). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) No, Sir.

(b) The prices of cotton/cotton yarn have maintained an upward trend during the current year.

(c) The main reasons for the upward trend in the prices of cotton/cotton yarn have been unexpected fall in the cotton production, low opening stock at the beginning of 1991–92 cotton season, increase in the cost of other inputs like power, fuel, etc.

(d) to (f). Modalities to import cotton for handloom weavers are being worked out.

SHRI ANBARASU ERA: Next to agricultural sector, handloom weavers form major chunk of the population. Handloom weavers are one of the most neglected lot in the population and they are undergoing worst sufferings. We are fully aware that mostly Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and backward class people earn their livelihood through handloom weaving.

Due to short supply of yarn and also due to hike in the price of yarn, they are not getting yarn in time and an alarming situation is created.

I want to know from the hon. Minister whether suitable measures are taken for regular supply of yarn to the weavers to save them from starving.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: The hon. Member is right to say that yarn has become a little costlier as a result of which the weavers are in trouble. We have taken immediate steps. Firstly, no sooner did the prices of yarn rise we suspended its export and we have neither made open nor released the export quota to be released this year. We are keeping an eye on it that adequate yarn is made available to weavers. For this purpose, we have written to N.T.C. to reduce its weaving activity and instead increase production of yarn. Moreover, we are laying much emphasis on the yarn of below 40 counts which is used much by weavers. At the same time, the main function of the N.H.D.C. is to supply yarn. For that purpose depots have been opened at various places.

The Chief Minister and the State Government have been requested in writing to launch dehoarding campaigns at the district headquarters through Committee and the Mills of the State Government and that of Co-operative Sector may increase production of yarn so that yarn may be made available in sufficient quantity. Besides, the important decision we are going to take is that we have taken a decision to import two lakh cotton bales to be made available to handloom weavers alone.

[*English*]

SHRI ANBARASU ERA: Sir, I have asked whether any decision has been taken to import cotton bales to meet the requirements of handloom weavers. That is my question. What he has said here is, the modalities to import cotton for handloom weavers are being worked out.

I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that during 1982, when such a situation arose, when Mrs. Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister and Mr. Pranab Mukherjee was the Commerce and Textiles Minister, a large number of orders were immediately placed with China for the import of yarn.

How long will they take to work out the modalities? I want it should be time-frame. What are the modalities? From what countries, they are going to import?

I know, many of the Ministers are guided by the bureaucrats. They should take initiative. There should be a commitment to the people's cause. Every time when we ask, the reply is, "Committees are being formed". I am not criticising this Government. The question is, whether this Government or the previous Government or any Government, they should not become slave to the bureaucrats. (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. That is not going on record please.

(*Interruptions*)*.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not going on record please. No. Take your seat. You are crossing your limit.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Realising the problems of handloom weavers we decided to import two lakh bales for handloom sector. Therefore, I am not agreeable with the hon. Member that the Government is not serious about it.

MR. SPEAKER: How much time would you take to do it?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: The Cabinet has almost taken its decision on it. We will do it very soon.

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*Not recorded.

[*English*]

SHRI M.R. JANARTHANAN: When the Government came to know the new cotton crop in the beginning of 1992 cotton season, I want to know from the hon. Minister, through you, what made the Government to make the export policy of 5 lakh bales in the month of November, 1991. Secondly, in view of the cheaper price of the foreign cotton which is to be imported, will the Government assure that the yarn price will come down which will help the handloom and powerloom sector? Otherwise, the Government must accept the reason for the import policy of cotton which has so far not been adopted by this Government.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the information of the hon. Member regarding the announcement made in December about five lakh bales I would like to tell that during the period of the previous Government cotton was exported under their own policy. At that time the stet was of 133 lakh bales while the production was of nearly 117 lakh bales. The price that obtained in September, 1990 was 7300 per candy which rose to 8,000 in February. After that the prices rose in April to 10,350 and then in July to 12, 800. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI M.R. KADAMBAR JANARTHANAN: I am seeking your protection. This Government announced th export policy of cotton in 1991. That made the cotton price shoot up in the month of December. I am asking the hon. Minister this question.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: I am coming to that point. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in August, 1990 the prices rose to 14, 200 and with the beginning of the cotton season in 1991 it came down to 11, 500 in September, 9800 in October and 9700 in November, 1991. Within three months prices came down from 14, 200 to 9000. When we found that the farmers world not get the full price, it was necessary to think something about it. Therefore, announcement for five lakh bales was made. One lakh bales were kept open and four lakh bales were left to the disposal of Cotton Corporation of India with the instruction to export only when it was necessary to control prices, otherwise not. No export was made of that. Therefore, I would like to submit to the hon. Member that there are contrary interests in it. The cotton industry should keep it in mind. If we safeguard th interests of the weavers, problems arise and if cotton growers are not given full price, they shift the crops. Only after taking all these things into account, the cotton policy is adopted.

SHRI SATYNARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the weavers should get proper jobs and they should get benefits. We are worried about it. Now it is being said that yarn is not available. There are cotton mills for yarn which should be operated. Under the national policy this.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question.

SHRI SATYNARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to submit that we are the elected representatives and our weavers are in trouble, So, certain measures should be taken to remove their difficulties. As the hon. Minister has stated in his reply and admitted himself that the prices of cotton yarn and cotton have risen and have maintained an upward trend. In such a situation I would like to know whether any effective measures are being taken to bring about changes in the export policy to ensure availability of proper kind of yarn at fair price to weavers?

MR. SPEAKER: Its answer had been given in the reply to the first question.

[*English*]

SHRIMATI PASAVA RAJESWARI: I would like to know from the hon. Minister what type of cotton he is going to import whether it is medium–staple cotton or the long–staple cotton. The fact of the matter is that the input rate for the cotton–growing people has risen very much. The farmer will be hit very much; he will not be getting the remunerative price if cotton is imported. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this matter has come to the notice of the Government or not. Further, I would like the hon. Minister to enlighten me if he further imports cotton, will the farmers not be hit; will there not be decline in cotton production.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Two lakh bales have been reserved for handloom industry only, therefore, no cotton grower will be hit by it, because in comparison to minimum support price, the prices are still very high, so I think that only handloom weavers will be benefited if we import 2 lakh bales.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you might be remembering that you had also called a meeting in your chamber for discussing this issue and you as well as the hon. Minister was of the same opinion that the problem of weavers is a serious problem and it requires a full day debate. The hon. Minister has himself accepted that the condition of weavers has become very miserable. At some places people have committed suicide due to hunger. The main question is not of the rising prices of cotton yarn but of the difficulties being faced in the sale of manufactured cloth. The Government is well aware of the fact that there are no buyers available for the goods worth crores of rupees.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: This is restricted to the export and import of cotton. The problems may not be restricted. This question is restricted.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: But the question is that it relates to the problems of the weavers.

MR. SPEAKER: We are not considering it under this question.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: Then I ask my question in this fashion–

[*Translation*]

Whether it is also a fact that the Government has commitments with some countries for exporting cotton yarn through a particular system and due to which an atmosphere of uncertainity has arisen and the prices of yarn are also increasing due to it. The hon. Minister has accepted that there are middlemen and black-marketing is going on. Orders have been given to the district officers to inquire into it. Will the Government also take any effective steps to check the middlemen who are indulged in black–marketing and deriving profit out of it?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Sir, we have allowed export of yarn to the 100 export oriented units only. Besides this we have allowed it to these who import the cotton yarn under advance licencing scheme. We have allowed our share in the quota countries, besides this we have no commitments with the countries having export obligations against capital goods. We are not bound to export to those countries.

As far as the middlemen are concerned I have already told you that we have tried to increase the supply through N.T.C. and spinning mills of co–operative sector. Besides this we have asked the State Governments to find out through district collectors that

whether there are any cases of hoarding and if it is so, then action should be taken. We have written it to the Chief Ministers two monts ago.

I have no objection, if you want a discussion on this issue.

SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the carpet industry of Mirzapur, Sonbhadra and Bhadauhi divisions of Uttar Pradesh which earns foreign exchange of crores of rupees is adversely affected by the cancerous situation. Through you I would like to know whether the Government is contemplating to give incentives to the carpet-weavers of Mirzapur, Sonbhadra and Bhadauhi on the export of carpets or not?

MR. SPEAKER: No, it is not related to this question

Central Road Fund

*65. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:
SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to increase the amount of the Central Road Fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the funds proposed to be allocated from the Fund, State-wise, during 1992-93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) No, Sir. The Government has not taken a decision yet to augment the Central Road Fund.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The funds are allocated to States from out of the provision made for Central Road Fund in the Budget. The provision available in the 1992-93 budget is not yet known.

SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, is it a fact that there is much difference between the percentage of length of National Highways in the country and the increase in the length of National Highways in Uttar Pradesh as also there is much difference between their average length on the basis of per lakh population?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question does not relate to the original question. If he gives a separate notice for the question he has raised, I will reply.

SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Is the Government contemplating to connect other roads with National Highways?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question relates to the Central Road Fund.

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, even after 44 years of attaining independence, approach roads could not be constructed till now in more than half villages, having population of above one thousand, of Uttar Pradesh and other several States. The Parliament has passed a resolution to raise the amount of road cess to be levied on petrol to increase the resources of the Central Road Fund so that more roads could be constructed in the country. My question is why is the Government is not implementing the decision and depositing the money in Central Road Fund after collecting it by imposing increased rate of road cess on increased rate of petrol, so that more amount could be made available to the State for constructing roads? The (b) part of the question is - whether the central Government is going to construct metalled roads in villages of all the States during the Eighth Five Year Plan...